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By: _____

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Date: _____

June 14, 2002



PATENT

Paper No.

File No. Proflowers-P1-98

IN THE UNITED STATES PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

Inventor : SCHUTZ, Jared P.
Serial No. : 08/149,650
Filed : 8 September 1998
For : COMPUTERIZED CONTROL SYSTEM LOCATED
AT AN ORDER CENTER FOR SHIPPING
PRODUCT FROM A REMOTELY LOCATED
DISTRIBUTION CENTER
Group Art Unit : 2876
Examiner : G. Akers

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The Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks
Washington, D.C. 20231

AMENDED VERSION OF THE CLAIMS

S I R:

Set forth below is the amended version of the claims.

1. (Thrice Amended) A method for using [a digital electrical computer] an order center apparatus [located at an order center for] to ship[ping] a product [from a remotely located distribution center], the method including the steps of:

producing [output electrical] signals representing a packing list for an order of [a] the product [by causing] with [an] the order center apparatus, located at an order center, [to change input digital electrical signals into the output digital electrical signals,] the order center



apparatus including a [digital electrical] computer having a programmed processor[, the processor electrically connected to a memory device for storing and retrieving machine-readable signals in the memory device, to an input device for receiving input data and converting the input data into the input electrical signals, and to an output device for receiving the output electrical signals, and wherein the processor is controlled by a computer program to implement the step of producing];

assigning waybill shipping information signals to the order with a shipping apparatus including a digital [electrical] computer [shipping apparatus];

linking, by digital communication, the signals representing the packing list with the waybill shipping information signals;

[transmitting the signals representing the packing list to, and] receiving the signals representing the packing list at[, a printer device at a distribution center located [remotely] separately from the order center;

printing the packing list at the printer device [at the distribution center]; and

shipping the product specified by the packing list, in accordance with the waybill shipping information signals, from the distribution center.

2. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, further including the step of:

[entering more of the input data at the input device] receiving a customized component at the order center apparatus, from an ordering system, [to produce more of the output electrical signals including signals representing a customized element received from an ordering system]; and wherein:

the step of linking includes linking[, by digital communication,] the signals representing the packing list with the signals representing the customized [element] componenet;

the step of [transmitting] receiving includes [transmitting] receiving the signals representing the customized component [element, along with the shipping information signals, to] at the printer device [at the distribution center];

the step of printing includes printing the customized [element] component, along with the packing list and a shipping label, at the printing device [at the distribution center]; and

the step of shipping is carried out by shipping the customized [element] component, along with the product, from the distribution center.

3. (Once Amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the step of [generating] producing [output electrical] signals representing [the] a packing list [for the order of a product] and said step of printing the packing list [is] are carried out by using flowers as the product[, such that the step of printing the packing list is carried out by printing the packing list identifying the flowers].

5. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of printing includes printing on a sheet in the printer device; and further including the step of:

locating demarcations on the sheet [in the printer device to] for detaching a shipping label from the packing list [from a shipping label] at the demarcations.

6. (Once Amended) The method of claim [5] 3, [wherein] further including the step of [printing is carried out with] locating the [demarcations including] perforation[s], [such that the step of detaching includes tearing] on the sheet [at the] for detaching a shipping label from the packing list at the perforation[s].

7. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, further including the steps of:

receiving a message at the order center apparatus, from an ordering system
including a computer, said [entering more of the input data at the input device to produce more
of the output electrical signals representing a customized] message [received from an ordering
system for communication] from a user of the ordering system to a recipient of the flowers; and
wherein:

the step of linking includes linking[, by digital communication,] the signals
representing packing list with the signals representing the [customized element] message;

[the step of transmitting includes transmitting the signals representing the
customized element, along with the shipping information signals, to the printer device at the
distribution center;]

the step of printing includes printing the message [customized element], along
with the packing list and a shipping label, at the printing device at the distribution center; and

the step of shipping is carried out by shipping the message [customized
element], along with the product, from the distribution center.

8. (Once Amended) The method of claim [7] 6, wherein the step of printing
includes printing the [customized element] message at the printing device on a greeting card
having preprinted artwork.

9. (Once Amended) The method of claim [6] 7, wherein the step of printing is
carried out with [includes printing on a sheet in the printer device; and further including the step
of locating a sheet in the printer,] the sheet including a greeting card having preprinted artwork
and demarcations for detaching the greeting card [from the packing list and the shipping label];
and wherein the step of shipping includes separating the packaging list[, the shipping
information,] and the greeting card by tearing the sheet at the demarcations.

10. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of assigning the waybill shipping information signals includes dynamically assigning the shipping information signals through a TCP/IP connection.

11. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, further including the step of:
[prior to the step of transmitting,] translating some of the signals, at the order center apparatus, to produce the signals representing the packing list and the shipping list signals in one digital format.

12. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the step[s] of [transmitting and] printing [are] is carried out with the printing device being a fax machine; and further including the step of connecting the fax machine to a communications system for the receiving of the signals representing the packing list and for receiving the shipping information signals.

13. (Once Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of connecting [transmitting] includes transmitting via an open end network gateway to a remote fax server for a subsequent communication [transmitting over the communications system] to the fax machine.

14. (Once Amended) The method of claim 12, wherein the step of [transmitting] connecting includes transmitting to a remote fax server with a fax modem in a local calling area of the distribution center for a subsequent [transmitting to over the communications system] communication to the fax machine.

15. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, further including the steps of:
associating an order code signals with each said order at the order center
apparatus;
obtaining shipping status information signals from the [digital electrical computer]
shipping [system] apparatus; and
combining the order code signals with the status information signals at a
machine-readable site having a network gateway address for access by an ordering system,
including a [digital electrical] computer, to determine an order code shipping status.

16. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, [further including the step of
printing] wherein said step of shipping includes shipping this product in
packaging displaying a[n] network gateway address [on packaging for the product] to facilitate
an electronic communication from an ordering system, including a computer, [digital electrical
computer] to the order center apparatus.

17. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, wherein the step of producing
includes:
[making the processor electrically connected to the input device by electrically]
connecting [the input device to] an ordering system, including a computer, [and electrically
connecting the ordering system computer] to a[n] network gateway[,]; and [electrically]
_____connecting the network gateway to the [processor] order center apparatus.

18. (Once Amended) The method of claim 3, further including the step of
[providing telephones at the order center for] wherein the step of providing
includes receiving acoustic ordering information at the order center by telephone, and entering

the ordering information [for use] as [the] input data to the order center apparatus.

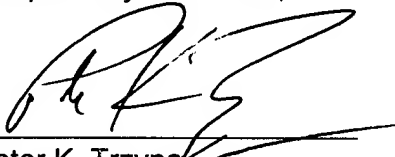
The Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any fees associated with the above-identified patent application or credit any overcharges to Deposit Account No. 50-0235, and if any extension of time is needed to reply to said office action, this shall be deemed a petition therefor.

If the prosecution of this case can be in any way advanced by a telephone discussion, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned at (312) 240-0824.

Respectfully submitted,

Date:

June 17, 2002



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